



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWO KC MEN SENTENCED IN \$45,000 CHECK FORGERY SCHEME

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that two Kansas City, Mo., men were sentenced in federal court today for their involvement in a conspiracy to manufacture and pass counterfeit checks. Sixteen businesses suffered a total loss of \$45,056 as a result of the conspiracy, Graves said.

Jeremiah D. Kout, 26, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey this morning to 15 years in federal prison without parole. Graves explained that **Kout** was sentenced to three years on the counterfeit charge and to 15 years on an unrelated indictment for being a felon in possession of a firearm, with the sentences to run concurrent. The court also ordered **Kout** to pay restitution in the amount of \$45,056.

Jeremy R. Riley, 25, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey this morning to 18 months in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Riley** to pay restitution in the amount of \$42,344.

On Sept. 30, 2004, **Kout** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud and to make, utter, and possess counterfeit checks. **Kout's** plea agreement acknowledges the government's position that he was responsible for more than \$30,000 in losses to victims.

Kout also pleaded guilty to the separate charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm. **Kout** admitted he was in possession of a Norinco semi-automatic pistol on Oct. 15, 2002. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Kout** has 11 criminal felony convictions for burglary and stealing.

On Oct. 22, 2003, **Riley** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud and to make, utter, and possess counterfeit checks, as well as to possessing, making or uttering counterfeit

checks. **Riley's** plea agreement acknowledges the government's position that he was responsible for more than \$30,000 in losses to victims.

Kout and **Riley** are among eight defendants who have pleaded guilty to an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on May 14, 2003.

William J. Yeokum, 22, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced on Feb. 3, 2004, to 15 months in federal prison without parole. On Oct. 21, 2003, **Yeokum** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud and to make, utter, and possess counterfeit checks.

Kelly A. Owens, 37, of Raytown, was sentenced on Jan. 9, 2004, to four years and three months in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Owens** to pay restitution in the amount of \$45,056. On Sept. 23, 2003, **Owens** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud and to make, utter, and possess counterfeit checks, as well as possessing, making or uttering counterfeit checks.

Co-defendant **David W. Foster**, 29, of Kansas City, was sentenced on Nov. 24, 2003, to one year in federal prison, followed by two years of supervised release. The court also ordered Foster to pay restitution in the amount of \$39,894.74. On Aug. 6, 2003, **Foster** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to manufacture and pass counterfeit checks at various businesses in Missouri and Kansas between May 1, 2001, and March 31, 2003.

Several additional co-defendants in this case also have pleaded guilty for their involvement in the conspiracy and are awaiting sentencing hearings. **Lisa K. Allen**, 44, of Raytown, Mo.; **Christopher R. Larabee**, 24, of Independence, Mo.; and **Terri L. Hill**, 39, of Stanley, Kan.; have pleaded guilty to their roles in the conspiracy to manufacture and pass counterfeit checks.

Between May 1 and Aug. 31, 2002, Graves said, **Allen** – while employed at Butternut Bread Store in Raytown – provided retail customer names, addresses, Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, and bank account information to **Owens** for the purpose of manufacturing counterfeit checks.

Owens admitted that she prepared – and caused to be prepared – counterfeit checks and false identification documents. The checks were cashed at banks and retail stores in Missouri and Kansas, Graves said, with the defendants sharing the cash proceeds and property obtained through this fraud scheme.

On May 1, 2001, and March 31, 2003, **Owens** manufactured counterfeit personal and business checks. **Owens** provided those counterfeit checks to **Yeokum**, **Allen**, **Hill**, and **Foster**, Graves said, who passed or negotiated the counterfeit checks at various businesses in Missouri and Kansas. On Aug. 15, 2002, **Owens** and **Hill** possessed counterfeit checks, Kansas driver's licenses, a laminator and other materials utilized to manufacture counterfeit checks and false identification documents. **Owens** also made, uttered and possessed a counterfeit check drawn on the account of Ford Motor Company on Dec. 5, 2002.

The check counterfeiting case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney K. Michael Warner. It was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service; the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department; the Raytown, Mo., Police Department; the Platte County, Mo., Sheriff's Department; the Overland Park, Kan., Police Department; the Holton, Kan., Police Department; the Shawnee, Kan., Police Department; the Blue Springs, Mo., Police Department; the Grandview, Mo., Police Department; the Harrisonville, Mo., Police Department; the Cass county, Mo., Sheriff's Office; and the North Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

The firearms case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow